

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in reply to the Office Action dated December 27, 2004. Claims 1-71 are pending in the patent application. Claims 1-71 are rejected and claims 58-62 are objected to. The drawings are objected to. Claims 3, 8, 16, 21, 27, 33 and 58 have been amended. Replacement figures have been provided. No new matter has been added by any of the amendments made herein.

In the Office Action, Figures 1 and 56 have been objected to because Figure 1 should be designated by a legend such as "Prior Art" and Figure 56 contains a spelling error. Applicants herewith submit new copies of Figures 1 and 56 to address such objections and respectfully request the Patent Office to approve new Figures 1 and 56. Applicants respectfully request that the objections to Figures 1 and 56 are overcome.

Claims 58-62 were objected to because claim 58 allegedly depends from a method claim, claim 39, instead of an apparatus claim. Applicants have accordingly amended claim 58 to properly depend from claim 55. Applicants respectfully request that the objections to claims 58-62 are overcome.

The disclosure was objected to because it allegedly contains an embedded hyperlink and/or other form of browser-executable code. Applicants herein respectfully submit that Applicants' disclosure does not contain an embedded hyperlink and/or other form of browser-executable code as alleged by the Patent Office. Embedded hyperlinks and/or other forms of browser-executable code as defined by the MPEP § 608.01 VII, comprises a URL placed between the symbols "<>" and http:// followed by a URL address. Accordingly, Applicants' disclosure fails to contain same.

Applicants further submit that they do not intend to incorporate the contents of any hyperlink and/or other forms of browser-executable code, but rather only the hyperlink and/or the browser-executable code themselves. See MPEP § 608.01 VII. Where the hyperlinks and/or other forms of browser-executable codes; themselves rather than the contents of the site to which the hyperlinks are directed; are part of applicant's invention, and applicants do not intend to have these hyperlinks be active links, examiners should not object to these hyperlinks. The Office will disable these hyperlinks when preparing the text to be loaded onto the USPTO web database. *Id.* Applicants respectfully request that the objection to the specification is overcome.

Claims 3-4, 8-9, 16-17, 21-22, 27-28 and 33-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as allegedly claiming the same invention as that of claims 1-12 of prior U.S. Patent No. 6,311,195 (“the ‘195 patent”). Claims 3, 8, 16, 21, 27 and 33 have been amended. Each claim has been amended to properly depend from its respective independent claim 1, 6, 14, 19, 25 and 31, thus claims 3-4, 8-9, 16-17, 21-22, 27-28 and 33-34 are not coextensive in scope with the prior U.S. Patent. No new matter has been added by any of these amendments. For example, claims 1-12 of the ‘195 patent include the claim limitation wherein a single E-mails is sent by a single agent. However, claims 3-4, 8-9, 16-17, 21-22, 27-28 and 33-34 do not recite such a claim limitation. Accordingly, the claim scope of the ‘195 patent and the presently pending patent application are not identical in scope. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn. Applicants note for the record that the amendments to the claims as discussed above are intended for clarification purposes, and further, Applicants do not intend to disclaim and/or narrow any subject matter in view of same.

Claims 1-2, 6-7, 14-15, 19-20, 25-26 and 31-32 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being anticipated by claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 of the ‘195 patent. As indicated in the Office Action, Applicants are hereby submitting a Terminal Disclaimer to overcome these rejections over the ‘195 patent. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that these rejections are overcome.

Claims 1-2, 5-7, 10-15, 18-20, 23-26, 29-32 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,727,950 to Cook et al. (“Cook”), in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,003,070 to Frantz (“Frantz”).

The current patent application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 to the earlier filed parent U.S. application serial no. 08/993,726 filed December 17, 1997. The patent application issued on October 30, 2001 as U.S. Patent No. 6,311,195 which claims priority to foreign applications P08-355047 and P09-166639 filed on December 20, 1996 and June 9, 1997 in Japan respectively. A declaration and power of attorney claiming priority to the foreign patent applications was filed with the original non-provisional patent application and received by the Patent Office on December 17, 1997. A copy of same was filed with the Patent Office on October 22, 2001 with the present patent application. The invention as presently claimed is fully supported by the foreign priority patent application P08-355047 filed on December 20, 1996. An

English language translation of this document was previously submitted during the examination of the parent case, U.S. Patent No. 6,311,195. Frantz has a filing date of February 25, 1997. Therefore, the earliest effective prior art date of Frantz does not antedate the present application, and thus, renders Frantz unavailable for use as prior art under § 103(a). Accordingly, for at least this reason, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1-2, 5-7, 10-15, 18-20, 23-26, 29-32 and 35 be withdrawn.

Claims 36-71 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Cook in view of Frantz and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,682,469 to Linnett ("Linnett"). However, as noted above, Frantz is not prior art, and thus this rejection is improper for at least this reason. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 36-71 under 35 U.S.C. §103 be withdrawn.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of their patent application and earnestly solicit an early allowance of same.

Respectfully submitted,

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Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Figures 1 and 56. These sheets replace the original sheets including Figures 1 and 56.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets